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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

FRIDAY, MARCH 4, 2005

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE
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HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

EU's Turkey Representative Sees 'Slippage' in Reforms -
Milliyet

European Commission: Turkey's Performance Not Sufficient -
Aksam

FM Gul: EU Always Our Top Agenda Item - Milliyet

Shiites Warm to Talabani As Iraq President - Sabah

China Reacts to US Human Rights Report - Hurriyet

Karzai Assigns General Dostum to Chair Afghan Military

-Hurriyet

US Preparing for a Woman President - Aksam

OPINION MAKERS

US General Bell Visits General Buyukanit - Cumhuriyet

Kurds, Shiites Disagree Over Kirkuk - Cumhuriyet

Iraq's Caferi Voices Support for Kurdish Federation - Yeni
Safak

US Hires Ba'athist Generals for Iraqi Army - Radikal

Eurobarometer: 77 Percent of Turkish Cypriots Want EU

Membership - Radikal

Tough Warning for Syria: Withdraw From Lebanon - Yeni Safak

Arabs Also Ask Syria to Pull Out of Lebanon - Cumhuriyet

Two Seats Reserved for Turkish Cypriots in European

Parliament - Cumhuriyet

BRIEFING

General Myers Sees No Problem in Ties With Turkey: US
Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General John Myers,
said to the Los Angeles World Affairs Council that Turkey is
a close ally of the United States, "Hurriyet" reports,
citing a report from the Turkish consul general in Los
Angeles, Engin Aksay. 'The Turkish parliament's rejection
of the deployment of US troops through Turkey in 2003 should
be viewed as the result of Turkey's democratic process,'
Myers said. He added that Turkey has displayed close
cooperation in US troop rotations and the use of bases by
American forces. Myers stressed that cooperation between
the two countries continues in both Iraq and Afghanistan,
"Hurriyet" reports.

Washington Shifts Funds for Turkey to Iraq Supplemental:
Washington has decided that a \$1 billion financial package
approved by the US Congress for Turkey in April 2003 will
be transferred to the \$81 billion supplemental spending
package for operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, Turkish TV
reports. Turkey has not yet used the money, and Washington
believed that the government would not accept the money
because of conditions attached to the legislation.

General Bell Visits Ankara: USARMEUR Commander General
Burwell B. Bell paid a visit to Ankara on Thursday as the
official guest of Turkey's Land Forces Commander General
Yasar Buyukanit, "Cumhuriyet" reports. Before discussing
military issues with Buyukanit, General Bell pointed to the
historical partnership between the two countries and praised
both nations and their militaries for contributing to that
friendship.

'Double Apologies' From US Ambassador to Yerevan: US
Ambassador to Yerevan, John Evans, corrected his previous
apology for a statement in which he had used the term
'genocide' to refer to the killing of Armenians by Ottoman
forces in 1915. The Turkish Embassy Washington warned the
State Department over the remarks, and Evans was forced to
post on the US Embassy Yerevan webpage a new correction that
omitted the word 'genocide.'

US Human Rights Report Accuses TGS of 'Racist' Statements:

The US State Department 2004 Report on Human Rights evaluates Turkish General Staff (TGS) reaction in February last year to press reports claiming Ataturk's adopted daughter was of Armenian descent as 'racist public statements,' "Milliyet" reports. TGS claimed that the press reports 'violated the national values and feelings of Turkey.'

Ereli Denies Turkish Arms Transfer to North Cyprus: US State Department Spokesman Adam Ereli on Thursday denied again Greek Cypriot opposition claims that Turkey had transferred US-origin weapons to north Cyprus. Asked by a Greek Cypriot reporter why the US had not asked Turkey to pull out of Cyprus as Washington has been pushing Syria to leave Lebanon, Ereli said there is no parallel to be drawn between the two situations.

Defense Minister on Turkish Troop Presence in Northern Iraq: Turkey has 1,357 military personnel in northern Iraq, Defense Minister Vecdi Gonul said on Thursday. Responding to a question posed in parliament by the opposition CHP, Gonul said that Turkey has been exercising its right to hot-pursuit of terrorists in the north of Iraq. 'Turkish military personnel there also work as liaison officers under US forces in Kirkuk, Mosul and Tal Afar,' Gonul said.

'TRNC PM' Offers Joint Management of All Ports in Cyprus: Mehmet Ali Talat, 'Prime Minister' of north Cyprus, rejected a proposal by Greek Cypriot President Papadopoulos to hand over Maras (Varosha) to the Greeks in return for opening Magusa (Famagusta) Port to international trade. 'We cannot allow Nicosia to extend its authority to north Cyprus,' Talat said, blaming Papadopoulos for attempting to disrupt the economy of the Turkish Cypriots. Talat said the Turkish Cypriots are prepared to operate jointly all other ports in Cyprus.

Poll Indicates Popular Support for AKP: According to a monthly opinion poll by the "TNS Piar" company conducted 2,000 Turks, 85.6 percent of respondents view the military as the most trusted institution in Turkey. Politicians are the least trusted group, gaining approval by only 21.3 percent of respondents. The poll shows increasing trust in the ruling AK Party government, "Sabah" reports. 53.7 believe the economic policies of the AKP are 'very good,' according to the poll. Meanwhile, a poll by the State Statistics Institute (DIE) among 6,714 Turks showed that 70.2 percent of respondents back Turkey's full membership in the European Union, while only 16.2 percent are opposed.

Report Sees the AKP as 'Political Islamist': In a report called 'Understanding Islamism' issued on March 2 by the Brussels-based International Crisis Group, Turkey's AK Party is put in the category of political Islam, "Cumhuriyet" reports. The report describes Islamic movements in this category as groups that operate within a constitutional framework, refrain from violence, and adopt reformist methods rather than revolutionary actions. The report classifies Islamic movements in three categories -- 'political Islam, missionary Islam, and Jihad.'

Turkish Jetfighter Crashes: A Turkish F-16 fighter plane with two pilots on board crashed over Karabuk province in the north of the country Thursday after taking off from Ankara on a training flight. The cause of the crash was not immediately known.

EDITORIAL OPINION: Syria: Post-Election Iraq

"Syria is doomed to lose"
Erdal Guven commented in the liberal-intellectual "Radikal" (3/4): "The Hariri assassination has led to some developments concerning the Syrian presence in Lebanon and has enabled all Lebanese groups, with the exception of the Shiites, to express their anger against Damascus. There is no country in the region that supports a continued Syrian presence. Therefore, Syria is isolated in Lebanon and seems to be cornered internationally. The Syrian involvement in Lebanon stems from both strategic and territorial considerations. Syria's position is especially difficult, because there will be no 'prize' if and when Syria pulls out of Lebanon, such as an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights or the lifting of the US embargo against Syria. Furthermore, it is highly likely that the US will impose new conditions on Syria in the event of a Syrian withdrawal. Such demands could include political reforms or cutting off ties with Iraqi insurgents and terrorist organizations. But there is really no other option. If Syria declines to pull out, US sanctions will likely turn into UN sanctions. Damascus will be completely isolated. In either scenario, Syria is doomed to be the loser of this game."

"A Trap for the Kurds"
Melih Asik argued in the mass appeal "Milliyet" (3/4): "Looking at statements from the Kurds in Iraq and pro-Kurdish figures in Turkey, one wonders if the Kurds

genuinely believe that the US really is fond of the Kurds and supports their efforts to establish an independent state. How can the Kurds be so naive as to not see the fact that is so obvious to everyone else: The US wants to gain control over Iraq by using the Kurds, and wants to have the region's oil resources in order to secure Israel. Even with American support, there is no way for the Kurds to establish a truly independent state, but rather a kind of 'satellite' state. Such a satellite state is doomed to suffer, since it will have to work completely for American interests in the region. The Kurds are making a mistake by keeping their distance from Turkey, the Turkmen, the Shiites, and the Sunnis as well as Iran and Syria. They should know that they can be left alone overnight if the US decides to 'sell them out' when circumstances require. . Collaboration with the US in the Middle East might bring some encouraging results in the short run, but those collaborators are doomed to fail in the long run."

EDELMAN